(b) if so, whether Government are also considering local rate calls for STD between Delhi-Kolkata and Delhi-Chennai;

(c) if so, by when it is expected to be implemented; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. STD calls between MTNL Delhi and MTNL Mumbai networks from landline, Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) (Fixed) and WLL mobile connections are charged at local rates.

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

(d) Rates, of call charges are determined by the PSUs keeping in view the profit and its viability *vis-a-vis* private operators.

International Money Order Scheme

1826. SHRI K.P.K. KUMARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the countries selected for the service of International Money Order Scheme;

(b) whether the common man especially those living in the rural areas, would be prioritized as the most favoured beneficiary of this service;

(c) whether the time factor would be expedited since 48 to 72 hours in the satellite era of Space Age, is too long; and

(d) whether the charges would be comparably cheaper than the charges collected in the matter of customary International Money Transmission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Decision is yet to be taken as bilateral agreements for introduction of International Electronic Money Order are required to be entered into based on mutual stakes.

(b) The service when fully operational will be open to all.

(c) The time factor for physical delivery depends on a variety of factors like IT connectivity, uptime of the network, distances involved from the money order receiving centre to the location of the recipient etc.

(d) Charges are to be finalized on the basis of bilateral agreements and may vary from country to country.

Rural community phones

1827. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Rural Community Phones (RCP) provided by the private telecom operators in the country as per the contractual obligation as on 31st December, 2006;

(b) the targets fixed by Government for provision of RCPs *vis-a-vis* the achievements made by the private operators during each of the last three years; and

(c) the steps Government have taken against those private operators who have failed to achieve the targets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Reliance Infocom Limited (RIL) is the only private telecom operator providing Rural Community Phones (RCPs). The Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has entered into an agreement with RIL in September, 2004 for provision of 21,459 RCPs in identified villages with population of more than 2000 and where there are no Public Call Offices (PCOs). The target of provision of 21,459 was subsequently revised to 21,431 RCPs. As on 31st December, 2006, RIL has provided 14,620 RCPs.

(b) As per roll out condition, RIL had to provide 20% of the RCPs by September, 2005 and another 40% by September, 2006, which was subsequently extended to December, 2006.

A statement indicating the targets fixed by the Government for provision of RCPs *vis-a-vis* the achievements made by the private operators during